Appl. No. 10/025,581
Response to Office Action of July 26, 2006

Patent/Docket No. 26961.11
Customer No. 27683

II.   Listing of Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1.   (currently amended) A system of workforce optimization comprising:

a task module for generating a plurality of tasks from a plurality of requests from a plurality of suppliers, wherein the tasks are to be performed at retail stores;

a prioritizing module for prioritizing the tasks, wherein the tasks are prioritized according to a status of the assigned tasks and a ~~yield value~~ plurality of opportunity based retail factors;

a routing module for assigning one of the prioritized tasks to a member of the workforce; and

a client for rendering the assigned task to the assigned member and collecting the status of the task from the member.

2.   (original) The system of claim 1 further comprising a managing module for monitoring the status of the assigned tasks.

3.   (original) The system of claim 1 wherein the client is a remote node.

4.   (original) The system of claim 1 wherein the client is an interactive voice response system.

5.   (canceled)

6.   (original) The system of claim 1 wherein at least one of the plurality of tasks is a series of questions relating to at least one product supplied by one of the plurality of suppliers.

7.   (original) The system of claim 1, wherein the routing module assigns one of the tasks to a member of the workforce on the basis of the member's location and a skill level associated with that member.

8.   (original) The system of claim 1, wherein the factors are opportunity based retail factors.

9.   (previously presented) A system of workforce optimization comprising:

a task module for generating a plurality of tasks from a plurality of requests from a plurality of suppliers, wherein the tasks are to be performed at retail stores;

a prioritizing module for prioritizing the tasks, wherein the tasks are prioritized according to a status of the assigned tasks and a plurality of opportunity based retail factors, wherein the opportunity based retail factors include velocity of a retail location, number of new products for the retail location, weighted importance of the number of new products, number of non-scanned products, weighted importance of the number of non-scanned products, number of tasks to be performed at the retail location, weight importance of the tasks to be performed at the retail location, a value associated with a length of time since a task was last performed at the retail location, weighted importance of the value associated with a length of time;

a routing module for assigning one of the prioritized tasks to a member of the workforce;

a client for rendering the assigned task to the assigned member and collecting the status of the task from the member.

10.   (original) The system of claim 1, wherein each request is selected from the group consisting of labor requests, validation requests, and information requests.

11.   (currently amended) A method of workforce optimization comprising the steps of:

receiving a plurality of requests from a plurality of suppliers;

generating a plurality of tasks from the plurality of requests;

determining a yield value for each task of the plurality of tasks wherein the yield value is determined using velocity of a retail location, number of new products for the retail location, weighted importance of the number of new products, number of non-scanned products, weighted importance of the number of non-scanned products, number of tasks to be performed at the retail location, weight importance of the tasks to be performed at the retail location, a value associated with a length of time since a task was last performed at the retail location, and weighted importance of the value associated with a length of time;

prioritizing the plurality of tasks according to a status of the assigned tasks and the yield value of each task of the plurality of tasks;

assigning each of the prioritized tasks to a member of the workforce according to routing rules; and

rendering each assigned task to each assigned member.

12.   (original) The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of monitoring the status of the assigned tasks.

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13.   (original) The method of claim 11, wherein the yield value is determined using opportunity based retail factors.

14.   (original) The method of claim 11, wherein each task of the generated plurality of tasks is comprised of a series of questions pertaining to a product provided by at least one of the plurality of suppliers.

15.   (original) The method of claim 14, further comprising the step of collecting responses to the series of questions.

16.   (original) The method of claim 11, wherein routing rules require that the tasks be assigned on the basis of the member's proximity to the retail location of the task and a skill level associated with that member.

17.   (original) The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of re-prioritizing the series of tasks when the status of the assigned task changes.

18.   (withdrawn) A method of prioritizing tasks to be performed at a plurality of retail locations, comprising:
        determining at least one task to be performed at a retail location;
        for each task, determining a yield value by:
                (a) determining a number of new products to be made available for sale at the retail location;
                (b) determining a number of non-scanned products available for sale at the retail location;
                (c) determining a number of tasks to be performed at the retail location;
                (d) modifying the number of new products according to a first factor;
                (e) modifying the number of non-scanned products according to a second factor;
                (f) modifying the number of tasks according to a third factor; and
                (g) summing the values of step (d), (e), and (f); and
        assigning the task to a representative according to the yield value.

19.   (withdrawn) The method of claim 18, wherein step (d) further comprises modifying the modified number of new items according to a velocity value of the retail location.

20.   (withdrawn) The method of claim 18, wherein the step of assigning the task further comprises modifying the yield value by a value representing the importance of the retail location.

21.   (withdrawn) The method of claim 18, wherein the step of assigning the task further comprises modifying the yield value by a value representing the importance of a chain of retail locations.

22.   (withdrawn) The method of claim 18, wherein the step of assigning the task further comprises modifying the yield value by a value representing the importance of a product.

23.   (withdrawn) The method of claim 18, wherein the step of assigning the task further comprises modifying the yield value by a value representing the importance of a supplier.

24.   (withdrawn) The method of claim 18, wherein the step of assigning the task further comprises modifying the yield value by a value representing the importance of a brand of products.

25.   (withdrawn) A computer program for implementing a workforce optimization system, the computer program stored on at least one computer-readable medium and comprising:

instructions for receiving a plurality of requests from a plurality of suppliers;

instructions for determining at least one task to be performed at a retail location from the plurality of requests;

for each task, instructions for determining a yield value by:

(a) determining a number of new products to be made available for sale at the retail location;

(b) determining a number of non-scanned products available for sale at the retail location;

(c) determining a number of tasks to be performed at the retail location;

(d) modifying the number of products items according to a first factor;

(e) modifying the number of non-scanned products according to a second factor;

(f) modifying the number of tasks according to a third factor; and

(g) summing the values of step (d), (e), and (f);

instructions for prioritizing each task according to the yield value;

instructions for assigning each prioritized task to a member of a workforce according to routing rules;

instructions for rendering each assigned task to a client of the assigned member;

instructions for collecting a status of each assigned task from the client; and

instructions for monitoring the status of each task.

26.   (currently amended) A method of workforce optimization comprising:

receiving, at a central computer location, a plurality of requests in electronic form from a plurality of retail product suppliers;

generating a plurality of tasks from the plurality of requests, such that each task is to be performed at a grocery store location that is remote from the central computer location;

determining a yield value for each of the plurality of tasks using opportunity based retail factors, which include velocity of a retail location, number of new products for the retail location, weighted importance of the number of new products, number of non-scanned products, weighted importance of the number of non-scanned products, number of tasks to be performed at the retail location, weight importance of the tasks to be performed at the retail location, a value associated with a length of time since a task was last performed at the retail location, or weighted importance of the value associated with a length of time;

modifying each yield value by importance factors;

prioritizing the plurality of tasks according to the modified yield value of each task;

assigning each task of the prioritized plurality of tasks to a member of a workforce according to routing rules, wherein each member is remotely located from the central computer location;

rendering each task to the assigned member, wherein the member receives the task on a remote node; and

collecting a status of each task from the assigned member via the remote node, wherein the status of each task is accessible from the central computer location by the plurality of retail product suppliers.